

What is claimed is:

1. A shopping information providing server for providing shopping information, comprising:

a customer database which allows authentication of a user upon receiving an input ID with a password and stores the ID of the user and family information of the user in correspondence with each other;

a menu database which stores a menu item, a type of a material necessary for the menu, and a necessary quantity of the material in correspondence with each other;

first storage means for authenticating the user using said customer database in accordance with an input from the user and storing the family member information of the authenticated user;

second storage means for receiving menu selection information from the user and storing, on the basis of the selected menu, a type of article necessary for the menu and a necessary quantity of the article;

calculation means for calculating a total necessary quantity necessary for the selected menu for all family members on the basis of the family member information stored in said first storage means and the type and necessary quantity of the article stored in said second storage means;

information providing means for storing the

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article and necessary quantity calculated by said calculation means; and

special sale information database which stores a providing source, and an article for special sale and a price thereof in correspondence with the providing source,

wherein when the article stored in said information providing means is compared with articles stored in said special sale information database, and a matching article is detected, the matching article is marked with a symbol, and special sale information in said special sale information database, which is special sale information selected by the authenticated user, is stored in said information providing means in correspondence with the providing source, and

the information stored in said information providing means is provided to the authenticated user in accordance with a request from the authenticated user.

2. A shopping information providing client/server system having a client apparatus and a server apparatus for providing shopping information, comprising:

a customer database which stores an ID of a user and family information of the user in correspondence with each other;

a menu database which stores a menu item, a type

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of a material necessary for the menu, and a necessary quantity of the material in correspondence with each other;

5 first storage means for authenticating the user using said customer database in accordance with an input from the user and storing the family member information of the authenticated user;

10 second storage means for receiving menu selection information from the user and storing, on the basis of the selected menu, a type of article necessary for the menu and a necessary quantity of the article;

15 calculation means for calculating a total necessary quantity necessary for the selected menu for all family members on the basis of the family member information stored in said first storage means and the type and necessary quantity of the article stored in said second storage means;

20 information providing means for storing the article and necessary quantity calculated by said calculation means; and

special sale information database which stores a providing source, and an article for special sale and a price thereof in correspondence with the providing source,

25 wherein when the article stored in said information providing means is compared with articles

stored in said special sale information database, and a matching article is detected, the matching article is marked with a symbol, and special sale information in said special sale information database, which is
5 special sale information selected by the authenticated user, is stored in said information providing means in correspondence with the providing source, and

the information stored in said information providing means is provided to the client apparatus in accordance with a request from the authenticated user.

3. A shopping information providing method comprising the steps of:

10 authenticating a user using a customer database which allows authentication of a user upon receiving an input ID with a password and stores the ID of the user and family information of the user in correspondence with each other, and selecting and storing the family information of the authenticated user;

15 storing a type and necessary quantity of a material necessary for a menu selected by the user using a menu database which stores a menu item, a type of a material necessary for the menu, and a necessary quantity of the material in correspondence with each other;

20 calculating a total necessary quantity necessary for the selected menu for all family members on the

basis of the stored family member information and the stored type and necessary quantity of the material;

storing special sale information including an article for special sale and a price thereof from a providing source in correspondence with the providing source; and

comparing the material obtained in the calculation step with articles stored in a special sale information database, and when a matching article is detected, providing, to the authenticated user, special sale information of the matching article for special sale together with the information calculated in the calculation step.

4. A shopping information providing server according to claim 1, wherein

said server further comprises a stock information database which stores stock information corresponding to the user ID, and

stock shortage information in the stock information database is provided to the authenticated user.

5. A shopping information providing client/server system according to claim 2, wherein

said server further comprises a stock information database which stores stock information corresponding to the user ID, and

stock shortage information in the stock
information database is provided to the authenticated
user.